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Essays, Expositions, &c.

THE FALLING LEAF.

AN AUTUMN MEDITATION.

"When Autumn, bleak, and sun-burnt, do appear,
With his gold hand gilding the falling leaf,
Bringing up Winter to fulfil the year,
Bearing upon his back the ripened sheaf;
. . . . . .
Then, be the even foul, or even fair,
Methinks my heartè's joy is stainèd with some care."

"We all do fade as a leaf."—ISAIAH lxiv. 6.

WHAT an exalting gift of God to man is the power of contemplation: and how ennobling the reasoning faculty, that distinguishes him from the brutes which perish. But, alas! how few of us value these gifts aright. There are men who, if they can avoid it, never think, and hence they never care to reason—men whose bodily organisations are so gross and heavy, that the soul's ethereal flame is almost extinguished by the mass of sensualism which presses upon it. To such men are well nigh lost all

"Intellectual life,
All sweet sensations, all ennobling thoughts,
All adoration of the God in nature,
All lovely, and all honourable things,
Whatever makes the mortal spirit feel
The joy and greatness of its future being."

You may take one of these men, and place him amidst the most enchanting scenes, and he will behold them with dull unmeaning gaze. Before *his* vision the sun may set in wondrous glory, but no admiration thrills his breast. To him there is no beauty in the landscape, and no grandeur in the cloud. Of such a one it may be truly said—

"The primrose on the river's brim
A yellow primrose is to him,
And *nothing more*."

Such a man might read the language of our text, and, in *his* heart, it would awaken no responsive echo; no such emotions as those which must have passed through the mind of Bishop Horne whilst composing the beautiful hymn so often conned in childhood's years—

"See the leaves around us falling,
Dry and withered, to the ground;
Thus to thoughtless mortals calling,
In a sad and solemn sound.

. . . . .

"Yearly in our course returning,
Messengers of shortest stay,
Thus we preach this truth concerning,—
Heaven and earth shall pass away."

May *we* ever be anxious to improve the powers of mind with which the Creator has endowed us. May it be our joy to admire His glorious works in nature, and may we reverentially watch the leadings of his providence, and adore the riches of his grace. Daily may we study His Holy Word, and seek to derive therefrom that heavenly wisdom, and that instruction, for this earthly life, which it is its province to impart. And, as a means to advance these ends, we solicit attention to the brief and simple, but truthful and suggestive aphorism which our text contains.

The wise man has informed us that "to every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven," and at the *present* season, as the evening twilight, day by day, steals earlier upon us, we become conscious that the year is growing old, and, like a snow-flake upon the waters, fast vanishing into the illimitable ocean of the past.

Spring, with its young life, and budding beauty, has gladdened our hearts, and caused the glow of earnest anticipation to flush our cheeks; and Summer, in her vernal robe, hath crossed our pathway, and scattered thereon her fruits and flowers. And *now* the faint moaning of the winds, as they shake the embrowning branches—the chill mist, which, like a ghost, nightly rises from the meadows—and the loosened leaf, as it hovers a moment in mid-air, and then drops, sere and sapless, at our feet, remind us, that Autumn stands upon the threshold, willing, and waiting, to impress again upon our treacherous memories his oft-told tale, that all earthly things are *passing away*.

In the consideration of this short passage of Scripture, two things will naturally engage our attention, namely, the object mentioned, and the illustration employed.

I. The object mentioned. "*A leaf.*"

What a common, and apparently simple object is a leaf. And yet, what numerous thoughts does it enkindle in the intelligent and reflective mind. In your solitary rambles, pluck one, and examine it with care. Mark well its structure, and its parts; its veins and skin; the symmetry of its form, and the glowing beauty of its hue. Note its tiny cells; and its sap, the blood which sustains its life. Remember its connection with the parent stem, and the vital relationship which it bore to the entire tree; and then say if it be not a wondrous evidence of the existence of a designing and creative power. Think, also, of the number of leaves which are to be found upon a single tree; and then, if it be possible, imagine the quantity requisite to clothe all the trees and shrubs, the plants and bushes, which exist upon our globe. Reflect, too, upon their multitudinous variety, their diverse shapes, their varied sizes, and their ever changing colours, and your admiration of the wisdom of the Creator will thereby be enhanced a thousand-fold.

All leaves are in *one* respect, and in one respect *only*, alike. They *all fade*. The finger of Time touches them, and they pass away.

Very aptly is man compared by the prophet to "a leaf." *He* is, not only fearfully, but "wonderfully made." What divine skill is displayed in the

mechanical arrangement of the human frame, with its bones and joints, its cartilages and muscles. What surprising design is apparent in the organs of hearing, of sight, and of speech. How delicate the nervous system. What mysterious sympathy existing between the body and the soul. How vast the number of human beings living in this our world. How manifold and diverse their characteristics. How multifarious their mental and physical qualifications. The fair Circassian—the swarthy Lascar—the fiery Dane—the mild Hindoo—the subtle German—the degraded Hottentot. Consider the many grades of social life. The prince and the beggar, the opulent and the abject, the tutored and the untaught, the man of genius and the drivelling idiot. Truly, may we exclaim, how diversified the temperaments, faculties, and qualities of the many members of the great family of humanity! In one thing, and in one thing *only*, do they all resemble each other. They all *die*. Or, to employ the poetic phraseology of our text, they "all do fade as a leaf."

II. Notice, THE ILLUSTRATION EMPLOYED. *Fading as a leaf.*

This illustration suggests the thought, that as there are in a leaf the elements of decay, so are there in a man.

We know not what were the peculiar properties of the tree which stood "in the midst of the garden" of Paradise, "blooming ambrosial fruit": but this we do know, that, when he sinned, the Lord God "drove out the man: and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden cherubims and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life," thus debarring all approach to its health-preserving boughs. We cannot say what would have been now the state of the human race if our first parents had remained faithful in their allegiance to their Creator, and thus passed, unscathed, through the ordeal to which they were subjected. But we are all cognisant of its *present* condition. More than three thousand years have rolled away since an ancient patriarch, in poignant sorrow, uttered a lamentation which has been repeated by mankind in every age:—

> "Man that is born of a woman
> Is of few days, and full of trouble.
> He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down:
> He fleeth also as a shadow, and *continueth not*."

This testimony is not only true, but of universal applicability, for "we *all* do fade as a leaf."

Sometimes, when the life of the year might be numbered by a few days, we have seen, here and there, clinging to the frozen branches of a tree, certain solitary leaves, which, having bid defiance to wind and storm, seemed likely to maintain their respective places even until they should mingle their shrivelled forms with the tender germs of another spring. Apt emblems these, of some we see around us now.

Old men, with wrinkled brows and frosted hair, you have beheld the companions of your youth drop, one by one, into the silent grave; and you alone are left, cleaving tenaciously to this earthly life, as the leaves of which we have been speaking have clung to the naked trees. But, remember, though you tarry long, you must depart at last. May God Almighty bless you, aged brethren! and when the dread summons comes, may it find you ready; and, as shocks of corn, bending to the earth, but fully ripe, may you be gathered into the garner of the Lord!

During the first days of a genial spring, we have watched the bud spread itself abroad, and adorn the plant with early leaves; and fondly did we hope that they would reach maturity, and display their beauty to the summer's sun. But, alas, how vain the hopes of man! We awoke one morn to find them withered. The night-frost breathed upon them, and they perished.

So have we gazed upon a lovely child, with ruddy cheek, and rounded limb, and sparkling eye—with the glow of infant health, and all the charms of youthful beauty. Around its little form, the tender tendrils of a mother's

heart were twined. And, if sincere affection, or gentle love, or anxious care, could have secured it for earth, its stay would have been of long duration; but, alas, the icy hand of death touched it, and it faded away!

Frequently, during the summer season, the wind has arisen, and, sweeping, in wild revelry, over the trees, has shaken from their branches showers of blossoms, which have fallen around us, in premature profusion. Apt emblem this of man's departure from these earthly scenes, by accident or by sudden death.

In varied guise, and at different times of life, doth "the last enemy" assault the sons of men; but, sooner or later, all must hear his voice, and all who hear obey. "All are of the dust, and all turn to dust again."

We sometimes gaze upon the body of a departed friend, as it lies in the deep slumber of death; and, at such a time there has fallen, with a chill, upon our hearts the melancholy thought, that the clay contains no resurrection germ. Folded up within the dry and shrivelled seed, unseen by human eye, is a *vitality* which defies the power of time; and which, when its husky environment shall have been brought into favourable proximity with soil, and sunshine, and moisture, will burst the cerements that wrap it round, and evidently reveal itself. Not long since, a traveller, treading the sandy deserts of a far-off land, entered one of those pyramids which have withstood, for three thousand years, the destroying power of age. In one of the gloomy chambers of that massive tomb, he discovered that the parchment hand of a mummy still held in the grasp of death some tiny seeds. He took them from the corpse, brought them to his native land, and sowed them in his own garden; and soon the strange and mystic life within began to develop itself. The seed swelled and burst. It sprang up and brought forth fruit; "first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear." Such is the inherent vitality which exists in the body of a seed. But no such latent vitality reposes in the body of a man. He dies *not* as a seed. He fades "*as a leaf*."

Well may we exclaim, as we consider these truths, "If a man die, shall he live again?" This query was propounded by the votaries of old philosophies; but *they* obtained no certain answer. As in the past, so in the present, the strength of human reason has frequently rolled away the stone from the door of the sepulchre, and, looking into the dark cavern of the grave, it has shouted aloud this same inquiry: but no responsive voice has broken the solemn silence of the dead. Revelation, alone, by teaching the duality of our nature, and the future destiny of the race, has replied to this important question. The Book of God informs us, that man possesses a spiritual as well as a corporeal nature, and, that, when the shaft of death strikes the latter, the former glides away, and enters the confines of the silent land,—

"The bourn from whence no traveller returns."

When man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets; when the silver cord is loosed, and the golden bowl broken; when the pitcher is broken at the fountain, and the wheel broken at the cistern; "then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." A knowledge of this glorious truth enabled the patriarch Job to say, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thy hands." Therefore, upon the authority of a "thus saith the Lord," we may certainly aver that, if a man die, he *shall* live again. Like the leaf, his body will fade, and decay; like the leaf, he will fall to the earth, and mingle again with the dust of the ground; but God will guard the mouldering dust. He whose eye is never closed for slumber, He will watch over every particle, and, in his own good time, re-collect and re-animate the scattered frame, and make it a fit habitation for the intelligent and immortal soul. But let us remember that the sleep of death possesses no purgative or purifying power. As the night leaves us, so will the morning find us. "Them that sleep in the dust

of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some"—oh, fearful thought!—"some to shame and everlasting contempt." "There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust." Are we asking how we shall escape the doom of the latter, and by what means we can attain unto the blessings of the former? The answer is, *The light that gleams from Calvary shows the way.* "Our Saviour Jesus Christ hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." "Men and brethren, to you is the word of this salvation sent." Do you feel that death is a universal bane? Are you shivering at the thought of the grave? Do you tremble whilst musing upon—

> "The long extended realms, and rueful wastes,
> Where nought but silence reigns, and night, dark night"?

Then, we say, Behold the cross! This, and this alone, is the symbol of our triumph. Here pause, and wonder, and adore.

> "And at each step let higher wonder rise!
> Pardon for infinite offence! and pardon
> Through means that speak its value infinite!
> A pardon bought with blood! with blood divine!"

"The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Hillmorton, Rugby. J. W. Cole.

"ABIDE WITH US."

BY THE REV. SAMUEL COULING.

The story of the two disciples journeying to Emmaus is a very touching and interesting one. We cannot help feeling much sympathy towards these two as "they walked and were sad." They believed that they had lost their best friend—their all. Their expectations were disappointed, their hopes blighted. "We trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and besides all this, to-day is the third day since these things were done." No wonder, then, that they were downcast in spirit, and that their conversation partook of a sorrowful character. And yet they spoke of Him. No other name but His could give relief to their wounded spirits; and even when the supposed stranger "drew near, and went with them," and joined unceremoniously in their conversation, they could still speak of nothing else. Their topic was "concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people; and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him." They acknowledged Jesus under most unfavourable circumstances—they were not ashamed of the "Crucified One." And Jesus rewarded them by graciously manifesting himself to them, and opening up to their minds so clearly the necessity of all that had come to pass, so as to lead them presently to exclaim, "Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?"

But having given them some brief communion with Himself, and as "they drew nigh unto the village whither they went," he appeared as though he would have left them; "But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us; for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent."

And what a blessed wish it is that they here express, "Abide with us." Nothing but the presence of Jesus can satisfy the longings of a renewed and believing heart. There may be the enjoyment of robust health; there may be domestic peace and happiness; there may be worldly prosperity; everything around may conduce to earthly enjoyment and temporal welfare; but, without Christ, all these things yield no solid comfort, no lasting satisfaction. "Christ is all and in all."

To enjoy His presence, is to have all and to abound, even when all earthly things fail us. "My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." "He became poor, that we, through his poverty, might be made rich." He gives us all things richly to enjoy. Grace and glory are His to bestow. And although sometimes we are called to endure suffering and poverty in this world, yet are we "heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ." No wonder then that the wish, "Abide with us," should be prayerfully and earnestly expressed by all God's people.

Christ may, however, sometimes be present with us, when that presence is not realised; "their eyes were holden that they should not know him." Hence he appeared to them as "only a stranger in Jerusalem." To how much of our success in life, and to how much of our enjoyment of earthly good, we are indebted to the continued presence of Christ with us, who can tell! Many of us seem only to look for the presence of Jesus when we are engaged in religious exercises, forgetting that he has said, "Lo I am with you *alway*, even unto the end of the world;" implying that, whether in sickness or sorrow, or in prosperity and joy; whether in poverty or affluence; whether in life or in death; still he abides with us, "alway, even unto the end." A sense of this presence may indeed be lost—"He made as though he would have gone further;" and too often we let him pass on. Faith does not get a firm hold of Him—he passes on out of our sight, and we have to mourn for his absence. "Are the consolations of God small with thee? Is there any secret thing with thee?" Faith and prayer are the means by which Christ may be retained. "Abide with us. And he went in to tarry with them."

We need Christ's presence at all times. Here, however, a special occasion was pleaded. "For it is toward evening, and the day is far spent." This shows that we may tell Jesus our special wants; and make known to him our smallest cares, as well as those which most severely oppress us. He is a kind and sympathising Friend—"a brother born for adversity"—"a high priest who can be touched with the feelings of our infirmities;" and, therefore, whether it be now the evening of the day, during which we have toiled hard and long for the bread which perisheth, or whether it be the evening of life—when "the night cometh when no man can work," we may go to Jesus with our cares and anxieties, ask him to "Abide with us," and find him all we need. In the evening of affliction—in old age—and in the shades of death, "Abide with us" is a most suitable prayer. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." The presence of Christ will make darkness light to the soul; sorrow will be turned to gladness; and at evening time it shall be light.

"In darkest shades, if He appear,
My dawning is begun;
He is my soul's sweet morning star,
And he my rising sun."

Scarborough.

SABBATH HOURS AT HOME.

The minister may preach with power, the teacher may be faithful in the Sabbath school, and seed thus sown may promise a rich harvest; and yet the enemy may pluck it up ere it takes root, even in the Christian home.

Miss S., a giddy girl, was questioned as to the preaching of her pastor, and replied—"It is eloquent and powerful, for the time being; but for some reason, no matter how deep the impression I feel while he is speaking, it all vanishes when I reach home. At church he always strikes me as an excellent preacher, but I change my mind, and he is nobody, as soon as I am beyond the charm of his voice. On the whole, I don't think there is anything but glitter there."

This pastor was an earnest devoted servant of Christ, fainting beneath toil and discouragement, and a few in the church, among whom was Miss S.'s

father, were worrying at him and fretting themselves with the question, "Why don't we have a revival?"

His friend spoke of him as a most faithful and excellent man, whose piety raised him above any of the clap-traps which she styled "glitter," and she replied triumphantly, "Father thinks very little of his ability, and says he will never build up the church—that we shall not have a revival till we get a different minister. Last spring I thought much of him; but wiser heads didn't, it seems. Deacon L. took tea with us one Sunday after communion, as the time was too short for him to go home. He knew him in college, and says he had such work to get him through! He actually rung the bell to help himself out! I used to think him quite eloquent before that; but now all his solemn dignity seems ludicrous. I always think of his tugging at the bell-rope when he walks up the aisle. How 'circumstances alter cases,' don't they? Father said last Sunday after church 'it was so ridiculous to see a man who once rung a college bell, and swept the halls, for aught he knew, putting on such airs!'"

The "dignity," which seemed to this family so ludicrous, was merely the solemnity resting on a godly man who felt deeply that he must give account for their careless souls; his "airs," were the earnest agonising pleadings with them for their own great interests. Here was a trifling young sinner, who more than once resisted the Spirit, which called through his voice, now hardening herself in unbelief, and justifying herself by speaking lightly of God's servant; and who is responsible?

Look in on her Christian home, when its many members are gathered round the table, loaded with God's bounty. The sermon is criticised, as is the minister's gait and manner in ascending the pulpit stairs. The eldest son, who has begun to overstep the family rules, and to feel that he is outgrowing the necessity of church, as he did three years ago that of Sunday school, remarks that the parson had on a new suit—ready-made—from Oak Hall to-day; and all laughed at his keen wit! Encouraged by his success, another of the boys remarks that the sexton had put the Bible on the desk upside down, and the minister gave out his text so, but discovered his mistake in time. Miss S. rejoins that a man who knows as much as he *thinks* he does, ought to read as well upside down as any way; and the Christian father and mother laughed, little thinking that their approval of such trifling might cost them the souls of their children. The family ate, drank, and were merry, and left the table for an afternoon's rest at home.

And where was the man of God whom this father and mother should have been sustaining, whose labours they ought to have watered with their tears?

There was no social family dinner for him. Alone in his study, too overburdened to eat; wounded by the levity of Mr. S.'s children in the house of God, and the danger of sinners; feeling that none believed his report, and yet that a woe was on him if he delivered it not—he could only weep before the Lord, and lay his offering of toil, talents, life before him.

The case of Mr. S. is a real and not an unusual one. He would not have treated any one cruelly with settled intentions; he could not have dared to stand in God's way, or to wrong those who are dear to him as the apple of his eye. He loved the Lord, and desired the progress of his cause in the world; and, above all, he wanted his children to go to heaven. And yet, by his thoughtlessness, he was actually helping the enemy of all souls more than the veriest infidel in the land could do. Had that giddy girl, and those trifling boys, heard a servant of God ridiculed, and his worship ridiculed, they would have started in horror. They would have turned from the poisoned cup offered by a foe, but took without question any draught given or allowed by their father.

Sabbath hours at home are laden with the most awfully solemn responsibilities. In them Christian parents should follow up the services of the sanctuary by instruction and prayer, and on no account, by levity and inconsistency, be stumbling-blocks in the way of their families. God only knows

how much ministering servants have to contend with, and how much the great work of life is thus hindered. And these are the men who grumble that we have no revivals, and that our churches are not fuller. They are not hypocrites, nor yet are they sound asleep. They are just enough awake to realise that much must be done, but not enough to do it. It is high time for all to shake off their sloth and rise to the work, for the day cometh in which no man can work.—*Christian Era.*

"WHY BAPTIZEST THOU?"

JOHN i. 25.

"We are buried with Jesus by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."—ROM. vi. 4.

THE subject of believers' baptism is one that demands the especial attention of all those who feel that they love much, and desire to follow the Lord in all his appointed ordinances and commandments blameless. In times when the institutions and doctrines of God's Holy Word are so fearfully corrupted and perverted, and the traditional customs of a corrupt church are blinding the eyes of men, it is important for the maintenance of truth, and every right principle, that the sacred records should be searched diligently and prayerfully by those who value its teaching, and by those who are leaders and standard-bearers among the people of God.

The holy principles and practice of baptised believers, as presented by the command and also the example of our Lord and Saviour, and thenceforward transmitted to his disciples, to be handed down through faithful men, who should, from time to time, become obedient to the faith in the observance of his ordinances in his own appointed way, are clearly set forth. The simple study of God's Word would easily show that the Lord Jesus Christ instituted two ordinances for all his people to observe, and which it was his divine will they should scrupulously attend to unto the end of time. See the Saviour's will and commission respecting it—Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

That the ordinances of baptism (*i.e.*, immersion) and the Lord's supper, are both of them the Saviour's own institutions, and of his appointment, each of them being equally binding and important in their position, may be readily proved from various Scriptures to those who are willing to bow to the divine authority. For proofs of believers' baptism, see Mark xvi. 15, 16; Acts ii. 38, 41; viii. 35, 38. These, and many similar texts, show that believers only were called upon to observe this rite of the church, and that it belonged only to those, as the introductory rite, by which they, as intelligent beings, under divine conviction and influence, are led to profess repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, whereby they profess to be "buried with Christ by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life;" evidently giving us such an example for imitation, to which babes in nature are utterly incapable of yielding obedience.

Of the Lord's supper little need be said to show the believer's obligations to this institution as a divine ordinance, all professing Christians being willing to acquiesce in believing in its divine appointment, and necessary observance from time to time, as a remembrance act of love and gratitude, at which they determine, by divine grace, to renew their vows of love and service to him who loved them and gave himself for them, and, in loving obedience to him, profess scrupulously to observe the ordinance enjoined in his words who said, "Do this in remembrance of me."

But of the ordinance of believers' baptism, commanded by the same loving Saviour at his own baptism, and in his great commission to his disciples to teach all nations, many of those same disciples, ready to go with him to prison

and to death, leave him at the pool in the matter of a Christian ordinance. Is it not most marvellous there should be so many systematic disputes raised against it, when the Scriptures are so clear and conclusive in statement, description, and argument, upon this subject, that the most unlettered man might justly comprehend the truth, and learn obedience according to the mind of the Divine Spirit, if unprejudiced in heart and willing to be instructed.

Yet many and mighty are the obstacles men cast in the way. Rome, with all the secular power of the church, has ever combined, in this ordinance of divine appointment and sanction, to pervert the right ways of the Lord. Yet, as it is well known, the Greek word *baptizo* signifies to *immerse*, which answers to the sense of the terms in the English reading of texts. "Buried with him by baptism" (Rom. vi. 4). Also see Col. ii. 12, which conveys the same truth and the same meaning. The fact of Christians being *buried* in the waters of baptism and rising again, is represented in these texts by the apostle Paul, though he thanks his God that he baptised but Crispus and Gaius. It is to us a confirmation of the fact, that the order of the primitive church was that of baptised believers; that Paul had himself baptised others, being a baptised believer; and that the mode adopted everywhere was burial in water. Such being the primitive mode of administration, by what authority should this order of the church be nullified and others adopted?

How can pouring or sprinkling a few drops of water over the head, accord with the Scriptural command and interpretation of *baptism by burial*? or, how can the application of the Popish rite, together or apart from the dogmas of baptismal regeneration, be performed, adopted, substituted, for immersion; or be defended by any enlightened man born of the Spirit? It does appear to be reconcileable only upon the same grounds of reasoning as we would account for the sorrow of the rich young man in the gospel, who, though it is said of him that Jesus loved him, when he heard the Saviour's terms of discipleship, he went away, or left him, sorrowfully, for he was rich. The terms savoured too strong of sacrifice. He must still remain among the rich—what he had hitherto been—a lofty Pharisee.

"What others value, I resign;
Lord, 'tis enough, if thou art mine."

But to suppose that the mass of Bible readers in the present day do not see baptism by immersion in the Word of God, would be to charge them with the most culpable ignorance. Doubtless, many see it. They know that burial in water was the primitive mode of administering baptism, and that it was only administered to believers; that it was a standing ordinance of the church, performed upon every believer previous to a reception of the Lord's supper, from the time of our Saviour; that believers' baptism was an ordinance and a rite exampled and authorised by the Saviour himself (see Matt. iii. 15, 16; xxviii. 19, 20), to which all the disciples and members of the apostolic churches joined in conforming and yielding strict obedience; that every believer gratefully submitted to this ordinance upon his introduction to the church, in token of the vows of God, which he felt was binding upon him; as believers, they felt an earnest desire to testify to the world, that from that period they lived by the faith of the Son of God, and would henceforward desire to signify that their every affection would become dead and be buried to the world, and, by virtue of Christ's resurrection life-power, rise unto newness of life; that every believer felt the ordinance of baptism binding upon him the moment he believed, as much as the exercise of his faith, or any other grace—yet placing no reliance or efficacious power in any means, ordinance, or grace. Though the apostle says, "By grace are ye saved, through faith," he does not impute salvation, in any measure, either to the grace or the faith, but to the gift of God, which is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. For the life is in the blood.

"Jesus, thy blood and righteousness,
My beauty are, my glorious dress."

The believer immersed in the water, is buried with his Lord, because he feels it to be an act of obedience to Him whom he loves, and who first drew him to the bosom of his God, with the cords of love, as with the bands of a man. The ardency of his affection would not suffer him knowingly to break one of his Lord's commands, much more to trample wilfully upon his divine authority who has set us an example that we should follow or walk in his steps, and who has said, "Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." What righteousness could the Saviour mean but the righteousness of a holy and an obedient life, according to his rule and example? So Samuel tells us, "Obedience is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." And the baptised believer rejoices to say,

"His institutions will I prize,
Take up my cross, the shame despise;
Dare to defend his noble cause,
And yield obedience to his laws."

Dear reader, do not deny the Scripturalness of the ordinance. If you love the Saviour, think it over again. The love of Christ constrains us to obedience. May it constrain you to a calm, unprejudiced consideration of the subject, that the Holy Spirit may take of the things of Christ and show them unto you. For, consider, if you deny the doctrine of God's Word, you deny the Scriptures, you deny the example of Christ, you deny the authority of Christ, you deny the testimony of God the Father, you deny the acknowledgment and confirmation of the Holy Spirit's teaching, you deny the authority and practice of the apostles and the primitive church; but rather prayerfully say,

"As an emblem of Thy passion,
And thy victory o'er the grave,
We, who know thy great salvation,
Are baptised beneath the wave.

"Fearless of the world's despising,
We the ancient path pursue;
Buried with our Lord, and rising
To a life divinely new."

Birchington. W. KILPIN.

"A NERVOUS CONSCIENCE."

THE Autobiography of Lyman Beecher (and his family!) contains some curious revelations of feeling with reference to Baptists. As unceremonious opponents of sprinkling, who hesitated not to deny its validity as Christian baptism, especially as imposed upon unconscious babes or reluctant children, they were looked upon with peculiar dislike by the stern old fathers of the "Standing Order." They were innovators, agitators, disturbers of the peace of Zion, radicals, fanatics. And in the earlier times, they were indeed very stubborn and unyielding, their trumpet gave no uncertain sound, they hesitated not to connect sprinkling with Babylon and Rome, to call things by what they regarded as their right names. Their staunch protest evidently impinged very closely upon the consciences of the Pædobaptists, often awakening disagreeable sensations; and then it was foreseen that the spread of Baptist views would produce social and ecclesiastical changes not very pleasant to contemplate.

When Edward Beecher was a young man, he wrote to his father, asking him to preach at his ordination, as follows:

"My mind has been troubled as to the mode of baptism. I cannot administer the ordinance until I am satisfied that I can conscientiously adhere to the present mode. I have read or heard all the arguments which can satisfy Dr. Dwight and such men, but my mind refuses to act, and my conscience is unsatisfied until I can survey the field so as to satisfy myself."

The father replies:—"There is only one thing which you will have occasion to watch and pray against, and that is the morbid sensibility of what may be

termed *nervous conscience*, by which I mean a conscience made preternaturally sensitive and fearful; this, I have reason to believe, has worried many a man till he became a Baptist through excess of conscience."

On the whole we regard the above as rather complimentary to the Baptists. The prevailing sin of the world is not certainly "excess of conscience," and if this is the fault of Baptists, they need not feel particularly troubled. It is rather to be feared that they are losing this singularity, and are but too ready to fellowship what their sterner fathers openly condemned. There is danger lest an "excess of conscience," which *we* may understand to mean a tender conscience, is becoming displaced by a spirit of indifference to the whole subject of baptism. Let us be on our guard. By our earlier fidelity to Christ we succeeded most effectually in "worrying many"—yes *many*—"a man till he became a Baptist;" shall we permit Pædobaptist consciences to be at ease in disobedience, by our lukewarmness?

But what advice from a father to his son, from an elder to a younger minister! Here is a man anxiously seeking light upon a question of religious doctrine and duty, and he is warned against "a morbid sensibility!" He is not sent to the Bible to search for truth, nor to his knees to pray for light, but is told that the "*only* thing which he will have occasion to watch and pray against," is *nervous conscience!* He is to regard himself as having the truth already—to doubt is to convict himself of mental and moral unsoundness. He is to pray that he may have no scruples against infant sprinkling! This is the way then to grow in knowledge!

We are here reminded of the advice given by so good and great a man as Dr. Payson to Mr. Farnsworth, who was then his student in divinity. The young divine, in the course of his investigations, came upon that most unfortunate subject of Baptism. Like young Beecher and Alexander and many other honest young men, whose minds had not yet been drilled into unquestioning submission, Mr. F. had his doubts about sprinkling. He could not find it in the New Testament. He could not find it in his Greek Lexicon. The Greek classics were against it. He could find no example of infant baptism. In consequence he was troubled. He had no "reason" for his present belief. And he carried his doubts to his superior in years and wisdom. Did he receive the direction to search the Scriptures with yet more fidelity and prayerfulness—to take nothing for granted—to "prove the doctrine" whether it be of God—to rest nothing upon the mere custom of men—to take Christ for his lawgiver? No such thing. He was counselled to pray against his doubts as *temptations of the devil!*

The advice in this case was not so efficacious as in the former. Mr. F. became a Baptist.

Sad indeed are such exhibitions of human weakness and sin as the above, and carefully should they lead us all to search for the foundations upon which we build our faith.—*Christian Era.*

Purity of Character.—Over the beauty of the plum and apricot there grows a bloom and beauty more exquisite than the fruit itself—a soft, delicate flush spreads over its beautiful cheek. Now, if you strike your hand over that, it is gone. The flower that hangs in the morning, impearled with dew, arrayed as no queenly woman ever was arrayed with jewels—once shake it so that the beads roll off, and you may sprinkle water over it as you please, yet it can never be again what it was when the dew fell silently on it from heaven. On a frosty morning you may see panes of glass covered with landscapes, mountains, lakes, trees, blended in a beautiful picture. Now lay your hand upon the glass, and by the scratch of your finger, or by the warmth of your palm, that delicate tracery will be obliterated. So there is in youth a beauty and purity of character which, when once touched and defiled, can never be restored.

Correspondence.

"THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH MAGAZINE."

To the Editors of the Primitive Church Magazine.

DEAR SIRS,—I have recently become a subscriber to the "Primitive Church Magazine," the tone and views of which I much approve. It is to be regretted, however, that none of the periodicals of our denomination give that prominence to the "Baptist question" that its importance appears to me to demand. The "Reporter," when in the hands of Mr. Winks, left little or nothing to be desired in this respect; but that publication was lately conducted in a different spirit, and I am not surprised that it has dropped out of existence. This result has been attributed to the apathy, want of coöperation, &c., of the denomination. But I feel sure, that Baptists are quite prepared to support any similar publication that will stand boldly forward in its avowal of our sentiments. The "Reporter," formerly, was true to its name. It had, monthly, columns of matter under the heading of "Reports of Baptisms," which were most interesting and cheering to those who rejoiced that practical obedience to the Saviour's divine command was being yielded by increasing numbers. The same periodical, in the hands of the late publishers, omitted such reports in the first instance altogether, afterwards, they were for a few months inserted in the barest matter-of-fact style, and in the smallest print, on the cover of the magazine—as if the editor was ashamed of their appearance—and at last they were totally given up. Even in this humble form, we must have bolder champions of our principles and greater attachment to them if we take that interest in their diffusion we ought to do, and which their worth and importance demand. I think that the "Primitive" may well step in and occupy the ground abandoned by the recent "Reporter." Perhaps Mr. Winks may be within your reach to advise you in this matter, and I am sure he would be glad to find that some way was opened for the effective advocacy of a cause so dear to him, in promotion of which, his time-honoured life has been spent. Excuse the offer of these suggestions from one who is quite unknown to you, but the interest I take in the sentiments we hold must be my apology.

I trust all the readers of the "Primitive" will do their best to make it known to their Baptist friends, and very heartily shall I rejoice to see it increase in influence and usefulness.

I enclose an extract from a late number of the "American Baptist," which may perhaps be acceptable for your miscellaneous columns.

I remain,

Yours truly,

Lewisham. T. J. M. K.

Poetry.

GOD IS GOOD.

"The Lord is good to all."—PSALM cxlv. 9.

IN smiling June, in winter drear,
In autumn's withering blast severe,
Or in sweet spring's resplendent rays,
Resounds the hymning voice of praise
That "God is good."

The warbling lark now winds her flight,
Defies the utmost human sight
To scan her joy, or weigh her praise,
In chanting her unconscious lays
That "God is good."

Now bounteous summer strikes her lyre!
Oh! listen to her earnest fire:
"I burst the bloom, and yield the grain;
With these I echo back the strain
That 'God is good.'"

As go the reapers to the field,
Each blade doth to the sickle yield;
A harp we hear, her music, found
Writ on each pace of burden'd ground,
Plays "God is good."

But "God is good!" His blessings fill
The very universe! His will,
Most bounteous to our race!
Oh! let us join our voice of praise
That "God is good."

For time's too short to show His grace,
His love and mercy to our race;
Eternally his goodness pours,
And bursts the bounds of heavenly stores,
For "God is good."

Sound, sound His praise! let mortal voice
Ne'er cease to shout in notes most choice,
His glory, goodness, greatness, swell,
Till angel-choirs mix up the spell
That "God is good."

Bacup. H. SCHOFIELD.

Page for the Young.

DO ANIMALS REASON?

Do animals reason? I have no doubt that they do. They have memory certainly. They can be instructed up to a certain point. What is called the "cunning of the fox" is nothing but his quick sagacity. A multitude of stories—even enough to make quite a volume—could be gathered illustrating the sagacity of the elephant, the horse, the dog, and other animals. Even the stupid "ass knoweth his master's crib." A fox has been known—so I have been told—to carry off a small pig. In the course of his way back to the woods he had to cross a deep creek setting up from the sea. He could jump over it himself. But could he jump over it with the pig in his mouth? That was the problem to be solved.

He went off a little way and came back with a knot, a piece of broken limb in his mouth. It was just about as heavy as his pig. "Now," says he, "if I can jump across the creek with this knot in my mouth, I also can with the pig." In a moment he gave the leap, and over he went. He then laid down the knot, jumped back again, and seized his pig, and stood a moment as if weighing and comparing the two. He hesitated but a moment, when presto! he was over, pig and all. Was this not reasoning and logic? Could a philosopher or a divine have drawn a more acute inference?

A dog had been accused of killing sheep. He and his master were very fond of each other. It was a long time ere the owner could be made to believe the ill report about his favourite. At last he was convinced that poor Rover was guilty. As he could not bear to kill him himself, he came into the room one morning and said: "Peter, you may take the dog, after breakfast, and shoot him. Mind and kill him dead." The dog was in the room and heard it. In an instant he darted out of the room, and was off in a straight line. No calling could cause him to turn his head. Straight as an arrow

he shot across the lots and went out of sight. Every hour they expected him back. At night he would certainly come. But no, he never returned. Many months after that, his master was riding in a wild, lonely place. Just as he came between two banks through which the road had been cut, he saw poor Rover standing on one of the banks. His heart yearned towards his old friend, and he spoke to him very kindly. But Rover's heart was hardened. He gave one growl, snapped his teeth at his old master, and scampered off at the top of his speed. His master never saw him again! Unforgiving Rover! Thy memory was good, and thy will was strong, and thine anger lasting.

One more example. A neighbour of mine had a very knowing cat. Of course Tab was a great favourite with all the family. At a time when Tab had a family of kittens, beautiful kittens, too, and when it seemed as if it was too much for her to take care of them, one of them was given away to a neighbour. Little kit was carried off in a basket, and warmly welcomed. In a day or two, the door being opened, in walked Mrs. Tab, who seized her and made off with it—seeming delighted to find her child. In about three weeks she came back again, tugging her kitten, and laying it down at the feet of the mistress of the house seemed to say: "Madam, this kit was too young when you took it before. It needed my care. But now it has grown up and can get along very well. You may now have it." With that Mrs. Tab walked off leaving her kitten, and never returning for it. *Rev Dr. Todd.*

A HARP IN HEAVEN.

One of the sweetest recollections of my girlhood is a beautiful reply my mother once made me, when my heart was swelling with childish grief. I had just returned from the house of a wealthy neighbour, who had given me the use of their piano for a few hours every day, to gratify my extreme love for music. Our own cottage home looked so plain in contrast with the one I had just left, and no piano within its walls, I laid my head upon the table and gave vent to my overflowing heart. I felt greived and perhaps a a little angry, that we were unable to afford the one thing I desired above all others—a piano—and expressed my feelings to my mother.

Never shall I forget her sweet, gentle tones, as she simply replied, "Never mind, if you cannot have a piano on earth, you may have a harp in heaven." Instantly the whole current of my feelings was changed. Earthly things dwindled into insignificance, and the "harp in heaven," with its golden strings, became the object of my desire. I felt reproved for my repinings against the Providence that had placed me in a humble home, and from that moment the enjoyments of heaven seemed far to outweigh all the pleasures of earth.

That beautiful reply has followed me all my life, or rather has gone before me like a bright guiding star, lifting my thoughts above this transient life, and opening to my spirit's vision the glorious scene in that "land of light and life." I have a "piano on earth" now, but its charm is gone. Its music no longer gladdens my heart as it once did, for the ears that loved best to listen to its sweet tones are now enraptured by the grand harmonies of heaven. The dear fingers that so often touched its keys, now sweep the the golden harp-strings. Oh, that "harp in heaven!" How my soul longs for one breath of its rich melody.

As I look upon the dear baby fingers in the cradle near me, I think it matters little whether my child be poor or rich—whether her path be strewn with thorns or flowers—if she may only have a "harp in heaven."

Reader, will you have one?

THE FACE IN THE GLASS.

At first it was a baby face, round and dimpled and innocent, laughing and crowing at itself as nurse held it up to amuse it by the pretty reflection: then it was the face of a little girl, who had climbed upon a chair to look at the rosy, chubby image, and wonder how there could be "two of her."

Afterward it was the face of the young maiden, who stood often before the mirror, plaiting her hair and

putting on her golden ornaments, and adorning herself for the eyes of those whom she loved, and desired to please.

And now it is an older face, that sees the approach of wrinkles and "crow's feet;" and these defects, which the hand of Time has impressed upon it, it is not wrong to notice, because the old changed face makes the heart thoughtful, and reminds it that it is drawing nearer to its eternal home.

There are some beautiful verses in the Bible which the old heart thinks of, as the old face answers to itself in the mirror. They were written by one of the apostles, "James the Less, the son of Alpheus." He is said to have written them not long before he suffered death as a Christian martyr.

These are the verses:—"Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass; for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the word, this man shall be blessed in his deed."

The verses mean this; that when we look into God's word, which is a mirror to show us our faults, and see what is evil in our tempers and dispositions, and go away, and forget to try, by God's grace, to change what is ill, so as to please him, we are like those who look into the glass, and see a soiled face and a disarranged dress, and turn from it, and forget to wash and be clean, and to adjust properly their clothing.

Dear little children, every day you and I look into the mirror to see if our faces are clean, and our hair smooth, and our attire becoming, and such as will be pleasing to our earthly friends; shall we not also, every day, look into the mirror of God's holy word, and see if our hearts are cleansed by the precious blood of Jesus, and clothed with the robes of his righteousness, so that we may perceive in them something of His image, and may try to grow more into that likeness which will satisfy both our heavenly Father and ourselves?

Reviews.

The Logic of Life and Death; or, Words with the Unbeliever. In Two Parts. By B. H. Cooper. London: Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster-row. Pp. 84.

This is a very able little work, and furnishes a conclusive reply to G. J. Holyoake's "Logic of Death," a favourite book with the Secularists. Our own observation leads us to the conclusion that Secularism is on the wane even in quarters where formerly it numbered many adherents. Infidels, while reviling the *faith* of Christians, are themselves the most credulous men in existence. No people believe a sophistry more readily than they do. It has been our lot to come pretty much into contact with men of their school, and we know of no class in which the element of "*gullibility*" is so largely developed. Mr. B. H. Cooper's book is a logical exposure of their illogical heresies, and should be freely circulated among those who have been, or are likely to be, injured by the blasphemies of Holyoake, Bradlaugh, and Company. Christian people, too, will find their faith confirmed by Mr. B. H. Cooper's work. We hope soon to see it in a second edition.

Words of Wisdom for the Sons of Toil. By George William Conder. London: Elliot Stock. Cloth. Pp. 214.

The title of this deeply interesting little volume is hardly in good taste. It sounds offensively egotistical for any author to announce to the public his own sayings as "Words of Wisdom." Such a title, selected by the author, is too much in the style of Barnum, the puffing showman. The diction of these "Words of Wisdom"

strikes us, too, as being too scholastic for an audience of "working men," or, as Mr. Conder poetically styles them, "the sons of toil." Still the thoughts and sentiments are forcible and just, and are worthy of the attention of *all* the sons of *men*. The author thinks closely and wisely, and no intelligent well informed man, can fail to read this little work with interest, whether he wear superfine broad-cloth or fustian. The book *does* unquestionably contain many "words of wisdom," and we trust it will have a numerous and appreciating array of readers.

Unobtrusive Piety: Being a Memoir of Mrs. Mary Oliver, with Extracts from her Diary and Letters. By her Husband. London: J. Briscoe, Banner-street, Finsbury, E.C.

We are much obliged to our revered brother Oliver for having given us this deeply interesting memorial of his late excellent wife. The readers of the "Primitive" will, we are sure, possess themselves of the unpretending but precious volume, and read it with pleasure and profit. The extracts from the Diary and Letters are *specially* attractive and touching.

The London Quarterly Review. No. 49. Number for October. London: Elliot Stock.

This number of the "London Quarterly" is of deep and varied interest. It presents us with able and scholarly articles on Dante, the Milton of Italy, and his Commemoration; The Carlovingian Dynasty and the Feudal System; Brindley and the Early Engineers; The Vatican and the Kremlin; Palgrave's Arabian Travels; Female Agency in the Church; Planting and Training of American Methodism; Lightfoot on the Epistle to the Galatians; and, Brief Literary Notices. The "London Quarterly," while ever exhibiting the highest order of literary ability, is unvariably devout, evangelical, and orthodox in the tone of its articles. It is worthy to take rank side by side with the most famous of our Quarterlies, and this is saying much in its commendation.

The Natural History of Sin. A Sermon by the Rev. Benjamin Beddow. London: Elliot Stock. Pp. 16.

The text is James i. 15. The whole sermon was suggested by the execution of the infamous Dr. Pritchard, is marked by a serious earnest thoughtfulness, and is well worthy of perusal.

The Cornish Shipwreck. By Palmer Law, Ware, Herts. London: Elliot Stock, Price Sixpence. Pp. 60.

The Lamentations of a Twig of Cup-Moss on Dartmoor. A Fable. By the same author and publisher. One Penny. Pp. 16.

Two very interesting little works. The *former* was suggested by the wreck of *The Northern Empire* off Falmouth some time since. It would make a very suitable winning little book to present to sailors of all grades, and of both royal and merchant services. The *latter* instructing little fable is written in a very pleasing style.

Heaven on Earth to me; or, The Cross of Jesus. By the Rev. David Thompson. London: Nisbet and Co., Berners-street. Price One Shilling. Cloth. Pp. 128.

Christ the only Saviour. London: The Book Society, 19, Paternoster-row. Twopence. Pp. 32.

These two little works are by the same author. The latter has long been known as an excellent manual of the way of salvation. The former is a new publication. We can most cordially recommend both. They are earnest in spirit, evangelical in sentiment, and pleasing in their style. They are eminently adapted to be useful in winning souls to the Lord Jesus.

The Memories of our Fathers. A Centenary Discourse of the Northamptonshire Association. By J. T. Brown. London: Jackson, Walford, and Hodder, 27, Paternoster-row. Price Sixpence. *With Appendix.*

An admirable specimen of manly pulpit eloquence, in every respect

worthy of the occasion and the theme. The Appendix is of great historical value.

Light on Scripture in Daily Walks. London: W. H. Collingridge, Aldersgate-street. Pp. 46.

This is a reprint of articles which appeared in the "Gospel Magazine." They are deeply experimental, thoroughly evangelical, and eminently consolatory.

Oration at the Raising of "The Old Flag" at Fort Sumter: and Sermon on the Death of President Abraham Lincoln. By Henry Ward Beecher. Manchester: Ireland and Co., Pall Mall-court. Pp. 60.

Two most eloquent effusions, which we earnestly commend to the people of England, and especially, to the friends of Liberty and the Union in America. Thank God the reign of Slavery in that noble country is over!

The Memorial Sermon, preached in the Baldwin-place Meeting House, on the last Sabbath of its occupancy by the Second Baptist Church, By Daniel C. Eddy, D.D., Pastor. With an Appendix. Boston, Mass., U.S.A. Graves and Young, 24, Cornhill. Pp. 62.

A very precious record of the history of the Second Baptist Church in Boston, Mass., America, of which church our brother Dr. Eddy is now the honoured pastor. The narrative is itself a deeply interesting one, and is well and eloquently told by the preacher. British Baptists would learn much by the thoughtful study of our denominational history in the United States. The Sermon before us may be obtained by ordering of Trübner and Co., Paternoster-row.

The Lord's Portion: or, Giving to God made easy and pleasant. By the Rev. Samuel Couling. London: S. W. Partridge, 9, Paternoster-row. Pp. 48.

A calm, sensible, vindication of the duty of giving to God on a systematic plan, and as the Lord hath blessed us. This pamphlet should have a wide circulation.

The Guide to Printing and Publishing. London: W. H. Collingridge, 117 to 119, Aldersgate-street, E. C. Price Sixpence. All actual or intending authors should study this useful manual. It is brimful of information.

The following new tracts have also been published by our Baptist Tract Society, viz.—258. "*I cannot tell: God knoweth.*" A tract for the Thoughtful and Perplexed. 259. *Memoir of Mrs. Land Chin.* By her Daughter, Mrs. Oliver. 260. *A Few Plain Questions Addressed to Parents whose Children are about to be Confirmed.* 261. *True Baptism in Childhood.* A Narrative of Facts. By J. B. W. 262. *Faded Flowers.* A Tale for the Young. By Mrs. Oliver.

Intelligence.

MR. BATES, FORMERLY OF BALLINA, IRELAND.

Mr. Bates, when in Ireland, was known to many in the United Kingdom. Of late few of us have heard much of him. A letter, just received, mentions the kindness God has shown to him since he left; and there are, no doubt, many who will be glad to be able to rejoice with him in it. He is now pastor of the Baptist church at Dundas, a town of about 4000 inhabitants, about four miles from Hamilton, and more than thirty from Toronto, Canada West.

When he left Ireland, in February, 1850, he went to Iowa, one of the United States. At New York, Dr. Cone, on hearing of his intention to go to Iowa, where he would be on the frontiers of civilisation, recommended him to buy a farm, if able, as he would not find a church so far west able to support him. Dr. Cone aided him.

Mr. Bates passed over the Mississippi, on Saturday evening, May 19th, 1860, in a small boat, after waiting from noon for this opportunity of crossing it. The river is there about a mile and a quarter wide. There is now a large steam ferry-boat passing and re-passing all day with passengers, teams, and merchandise. He preached at Dubuque next day, and on the Monday reached Cascade, twenty-six miles west of the river. There he halted for the night. He found seven or eight Baptists, most of them Irish people. They had no chapel, no preacher. They thought that if he stayed, he might receive about 150 dollars (£30) from themselves and their neighbours. He liked the country, and resolved to stay; purchased 150 acres of land, and went into a log cabin. For two or three years he preached in the country round Cascade to a distance of from twenty to forty miles. God blessed his word. At Cascade, a place of worship was built, 40 feet by 30, of bricks, with steeple and bell, costing about £320, and free from debt. In the village were one or two stores, a shoemaker, a blacksmith, a post-office, a flour mill, and a few log cabins; but it was in the midst of a fine and healthy country, with plenty of all kinds of work, though very little ready money. Most of the business was done by exchange. The preacher was paid for his services by work, soap, sugar, pork, barrels, &c. He often worked hard, but preached widely, enjoyed good health, and at night slept soundly in his log cabin, 17 feet square, sheltering a family of eight persons.

At length the church increased so as to have 100 members. By degrees Mr. Bates contracted his labours, but still, to the last, generally travelled about twenty miles on the Sunday, and preached three times; twice at Cascade, and once at a country station. During the fifteen years of his labours there, five new churches were founded within a distance of twenty miles, in most of which there were members from Cascade meeting with them.

He was often invited to remove to Canada; but did not think, so long as God was blessing his word, that the opportunity of increasing his income was a sufficient motive to do so, while he had strength enough to continue his labours. At length, however, years were telling on his own constitution; he could not preach and work so laboriously as he had done. He resigned his charge, intending to preach in destitute places for the sake of Christ, taking nothing for his services; and living, in a simple way, upon his farm; unless any church should invite him to labour for it.

The church in Cascade was soon supplied with a suitable minister, an Englishman, who would be dependent upon the people, and whom they would be able to support. The church in Dundas, Canada West, by a singular providence, heard, in a few weeks, of Mr. Bates's resignation. Their own pastor had become an agent of the American Bible Union for that province, and they unanimously requested Mr. Bates to come and settle with them. Dundas is about 600 miles almost due east from Cascade, in Iowa. It seemed to him to be the will of God that he should go, and he removed to Dundas in October, 1864.

Dundas is surrounded with romantic hills and beautiful scenery. It is on the Great Western line of railroad. A beautiful stream leaps along its rocky bed, on its way to Lake Ontario, four miles distant. There are several mills or manufactories. The church has about seventy members. There was a neat chapel when he arrived, having library-rooms, &c., attached to it; but about three months before he wrote it was burnt down. They are building a larger chapel on ground adjoining, and intend to turn the ruins of the old building into a Sabbath school-room. The church has increased while he has been there, and God has been merciful in every respect. He feels still that without Christ he can do nothing. There are a few Baptists in Dundas who have nothing to say to the ungodly. Mr. Bates remarks, "I am a firm believer in the absolute sovereignty of God, and feel that we are like clay in the hands of the potter; yet I am per-

suaded of man's responsibility, and 'preach the gospel to every creature.'"

During the war with the south, his eldest son volunteered. He had been a baptised believer many years. He was made second lieutenant, was preserved in five battles, wounded mortally at Vicksburg, taken prisoner, and died in twenty days. Mr. Bates says: "I have every reason to believe he was treated kindly. He was allowed to write home, though it was with difficulty that his letters could be handed to our pickets." They sent home all his effects by "express" when he was dead, saying that "Lieutenant Bates was an honourable soldier, a gentleman, and a Christian," with no fault but that he had fought against them; that they had treated him kindly, and had sent home his effects, as he had wished them to do. Mr. Bates says: "This was marvellous, and I know not how to account for it, only that the Lord 'makes the wrath of man to praise him, and the remainder of that wrath he will restrain.'"

The next son is in Chicago, Illinois. Of his other four children, all at home, his two daughters are members of a church. Some of them go to a good school, in which Latin and French are taught, and which receives pupils almost free, the charge being but one shilling a month for each scholar.

Such are the outlines of a history of fifteen years, all of which have been crowned, says Mr. Bates, with grace and mercy. He is still well. May God continue to prosper him. N.

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA.

To the Editors of the Primitive Church Magazine.

My dear Brethren, — Some months ago I mentioned the case of Mr. M'Dowal, a very dear young man, who left this place for Melbourne, Australia. I have just received the following letter from him, which I will thank you to publish, as I think it will be acceptable to your readers in general.

Yours in Christian love,

John Brown.

Baptist Manse,
Conlig, Newtownards,
Ireland, September 30th, 1865.

"Melbourne, July, 1865.

"Dear Sir,—Agreeably to my promise, I now write to inform you of my safe arrival in this colony, after a favourable voyage of about three months. It was not very quick; but we had on the whole very favourable weather, and there were no deaths, nor any dangerous sickness on board. I was not sea-sick and my cough was a great deal better, though it is now as bad as ever. God has indeed led me since I left home. In Liverpool I fell in with one of those who are often in attendance there. He conducted me through Liverpool, and did everything for me, even to getting my berth marked, and all cheaper than what I thought from the circular. And on Melbourne quay I was just landed when my sister appeared, and conducted me to a very comfortable lodging in the house of one who at one time worked in the shop with me. If she had not come, it might have been a long time before I could have found them out, for I had no clue to their whereabouts. I am glad that my sisters look with no unfriendly feelings on Strict Baptists. Though Strict Baptists are scarce here, yet from what I know of their members, they make up in sincerity what they lose in numbers. From a discourse which I had with the pastor (Mr. J. Turner), I learn he has my own peculiar views in relation to the observance of the Lord's Day; but they use instrumental music, and do not celebrate the Lord's supper weekly, but monthly, believing that the passage cited in proof of it refers to an ordinary meal. I cannot find thus at home or abroad those who will perfectly agree with me on every point, nor do I think on these points it is of much importance. I do not by joining this church agree to believe any thing more than some articles which they have got printed, to which I can cheerfully subscribe. I hope you will think I am right in my intention of joining this church, as I am not at present even able to affirm that differences such as these can be branded as positive errors. I hope yourself and Mrs. Brown and family are well, and that the church is prospering both in numbers and grace. I cannot boast of much grace, alas! for in spite of God's tender mercies towards me, my heart was growing cold, worldly, and evil. But I still cling to the hope of salvation through Christ. It is in truth my only hope: for I have little hope in this world now, when a short time may end my existence. I feel very weak, and I have not yet sought employment. You will see that God has answered graciously the prayers which you so kindly put up for

my welfare; and now what thanks can I render to him for all the benefits which he has bestowed upon me. I cannot recount them all, and my feeble cold thanks are a poor acknowledgment for so much kindness. True, my health is bad, and death threatens me; but if I am not self-deceived, to die will be gain. For though Melbourne is a beautiful town, and every thing speaks of the affluence of its inhabitants, yet I would desire a better country.

"In concluding, I feel it my duty to thank you for the kindness which you manifested towards me when I was attending your church, and I hope God will bless your endeavours in bringing many more to the knowledge of the truth. With sincere wishes for your welfare, I remain yours respectfully, WM. M'DOWAL."

"Mr. John Brown."

THE AUTUMNAL MEETINGS OF THE BAPTIST UNION.

THE Autumnal Meetings of the Baptist Union were held in Bradford, on Wednesday and Thursday, the 11th and 12th of October.

The proceedings commenced on Wednesday morning, at ten o'clock, in Hallfield Chapel. Upwards of 400 ministers and delegates were present, and other friends in such numbers, that the chapel was completely filled. Half an hour was spent in devotional exercises. The venerable Dr. Godwin (now eighty years of age) presided; and the Revs. J. T. Wigner and W. Walters engaged in prayer. Dr. Angus, the Chairman of the Union, then delivered an admirable address, full of weighty sentiment and judicious counsel, which was listened to with profound attention. A vote of thanks was accorded to him on the motion of Mr. Brock, of London; seconded by Mr. Stevenson, of Leicester; and supported by S. R. Pattison, Esq., of London. Mr. Millard, the Secretary of the Union, read the message of the committee. Mr. Dowson, of Bradford, presented a memorial of the persecutions and sufferings of the Baptists in Saxony, prepared by Mr. Geissler; whereupon it was resolved "That the paper laid on the table be referred to the committee of the Union, to prepare a resolution of sympathy with the persecuted Baptists of Saxony;" and still further, "That a memorial be also prepared in their behalf, to be presented to the King of Saxony." A paper on "Our Colleges" was next read by the Rev. N. Haycroft, M.A., of Bristol. Dr. Paterson, of Glasgow, moved, and the Rev. T. T. Gough, of Clipstone, seconded, "That the best thanks of the Union be given to the Rev. N. Haycroft, M.A., for his suggestive and eloquent paper." An animated discussion ensued. The general opinion seemed to be that some change in the method of our ministerial training is needed, but grave doubts were entertained as to the practicability of Mr. Haycroft's suggestions. Some thought the standard of intellectual cultivation and power, which the writer of the paper deemed requisite in a regular minister of the gospel, altogether too high. The session was adjourned, after a few remarks by the Chairman, at half-past two.

In the evening public service was held in Westgate Chapel, which was filled in every part. Dr. Burlingham, of New York, read the Scriptures and prayed; and the Rev. C. Vince, of Birmingham, preached a sermon of superior excellence from 1 John iv. 2, 3.

The meeting on Thursday morning began at ten o'clock, and was held in Trinity Chapel. The attendance was larger even than that of the day preceding. The Rev. S. Green, of London, presided at the prayer meeting; and the devotions were led by brethren Lewis, of Bayswater, Pike and Harris, of Leicester. At the close of the prayer meeting, Dr. Angus again took the chair. The Secretary explained the action taken by the committee in reference to the persecutions in Saxony; and Mr. Dowson proposed, and Mr. Walters, of Newcastle, seconded, a resolution which expressed sympathy with the persecuted brethren, and directed the committee to take suitable steps to ascertain the nature of the law under which they are suffering, and, if needful, to bring the case under the attention of her Majesty's Government and that of Saxony. Several brethren expressed their disappointment that a memorial to the King of Saxony had not been brought up by the committee, according to the direc-

tion of the session on Wednesday. Mr. Armstrong, of Lincoln, thought that the King of kings should be petitioned. Mr. Spurgeon supported the suggestion, and was asked by the Chairman to offer prayer, which he did in a brief but very characteristic manner. A resolution was ultimately carried appointing Messrs. Dowson, Walters, Gould, Brown, and Chown, as a sub-committee to prepare a resolution of sympathy, and also memorials on the subject to the Queen and the King of Saxony. Dr. Evans brought up the report of the sub-committee on the Education of Ministers' Children. It was moved, seconded, and passed, that the report be received and referred to a committee to consider and report on it at the annual meeting in April. The Rev. J. Mursell, of Kettering, read a most able and important paper on "Our Associations." Dr. Price, of Aberdare, proposed "that the thanks of the session be presented to the Rev. J. Mursell for his practical and genial paper;" and spoke at some length and with considerable point on the working of Associations in Wales. The Rev. F. Trestrail seconded the resolution, which was carried unanimously. For want of time the discussion on the paper was much shorter than it might profitably have been. The Rev. G. Gould, of Norwich, proposed the resolution of sympathy with the persecuted in Saxony which the sub-committee were appointed to prepare. It was seconded by Mr. Walters, and passed. The memorial to the King of Saxony was next proposed. Dr. Gotch objected to a paragraph in the memorial relating to the opinion expressed by Neander on infant baptism, and moved as an amendment that the paragraph be omitted. The Rev. S. G. Green, B.A., seconded the amendment. Dr. Price thought the paragraph objected to was "the soul of the thing." Mr. Spurgeon did not think it was the soul of the thing, but he thought it was *the tooth* of the thing, and should not be for filing it out. The amendment was put to the meeting and lost by a considerable majority. The memorial as prepared by the sub-committee was then put and, with a slight verbal alteration, carried without opposition. The memorial to the Queen was withdrawn. A paper on "Religious Beneficence," by Mr. Stevenson, of Nottingham, was necessarily deferred for want of time. A vote of thanks to the friends at Bradford for the cordial reception they had given to ministers and delegates from a distance, and a short prayer by Mr. Gould, brought the proceedings of the session to a close.

In the evening, at seven o'clock, public service was held in St. George's Hall, when a practical and useful discourse was preached by Mr. Spurgeon, to a crowded audience, from Psalm cii. 16.

Ministers and delegates were provided gratuitously with dinner in St. George's Hall, and tea in the school-room connected with Sion Chapel, both on Wednesday and Thursday.

THE BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

On Tuesday, October 10th, a committee meeting of the above society was held in Bradford. There was a large attendance. The offer of Messrs. Bates and Stobo for mission service, which, at a previous meeting, had been declined for want of funds, was accepted. The Secretaries relinquished, for the present, their claim to the increase in salary which the committee had voted them.

In the evening a public meeting was held in St. George's Hall. Mr. Watson, of London, took the chair, in the unavoidable absence of John Crossley, Esq., of Halifax. Addresses were delivered by the Revs. J. Wilkinson, late of Orissa; A. Maclaren, B.A., of Manchester; and J. Gregson, of Agra. The speeches were excellent, and the meeting in every respect a decided success.

PROTEST OF THE LONDON PASTORS' CONFERENCE,

Against Certain Doctrines Propagated by Mr. James Wells, Minister of the New Surrey Tabernacle, in the Borough of Southwark.

Whereas certain unscriptural principles, subversive of the purity of the gospel and the foundation of Christian

morals, have been set forth in a sermon called "The Faith of Rahab the Harlot," preached on Sunday morning, June 18th, 1865, by Mr. James Wells, we whose names are attached to this document, being desirous of maintaining the purity and harmony of divine truth, do earnestly protest against the following passages in the aforesaid sermon:—

"I hold this doctrine: that in the physical, in the moral, and in the spiritual world the great God can suspend for a time any law he chooses." "God here suspended the law of falsehood, and by suspending that law did hereby take away the criminality of Rahab's falsehoods; that though she told two falsehoods, there was no sin in them, no crime in them; necessity demanded it: God here suspended the usual law of truth, and made that morally true which was literally false." "There are some laws he (God) will not suspend . . . not because he cannot—be careful how you attribute *cannots* to the great God. God cannot lie, because he will not:" p. 199. "Was Rahab justified in those falsehoods? Certainly she was. Say you, would you have told them? Yes, sir; I would tell ten thousand, if I were placed in the same circumstances, and had the same divine authority for it that she had." "We must be placed in analagous circumstances to tell an untruth with divine sanction:" p. 198. "I look back with pleasure upon some of the favours I have done some of the people of God, and would again, and will to-morrow too, if I am so placed." "I told you to get your piety ready, you hypocrites, for that I was going to shock it. The Apostle James makes that the best part of her conduct:" p. 199.

Against the doctrine contained in these statements we openly revolt, and judge it an incumbent duty publicly to protest against a creed which refers all moral qualities to the sovereign determinations of God's will, and ignores the essential rights of Jehovah, as the only ground of his legislative and judicial functions.

We deny that it is possible for God to lie; that he can justify falsehood, or any other sin, by an interruption of his moral law; or that he can take away sin by any method whatever, otherwise than by the satisfaction to Divine Justice, through the meritorious death of Jesus Christ.

Furthermore, we protest against the notion that sin can become sinless under any circumstances; or that Rahab's falsehoods were the best part of her conduct; or that in commending her faith the apostle commended her falsehoods; or that her falsehoods sprung from her faith in God, and not from her fear in man; or that there are "analagous" circumstances to those of Rahab, under which men may be justified in lying, or in sin of any kind.

Finally, we believe the universal justice or rectitude of God, to be essential to the perfection of his existence, and necessary to it; that punitive justice, on account of sin, is a necessary branch of immutable justice; that divine moral law being founded on the essential rights of God's eternal justice, must necessarily be the just expression of those rights, and the ground and rule of God's authority over accountable beings; that such law can no more be suspended, altered, or abrogated than the perfections of his nature, or the throne of his majesty; that a God without holiness, justice, or rectitude, is not an object of joyous worship, affection, or trust; and that the sentiment we protest against is a reproach to God's character, a slur upon his government, and inimical to the moral and social interests of mankind.

Under the influence of these convictions, respect for ourselves as ministers of Christ, and a concern for Christian churches, especially those of Strict Communion Principles, both in town and country, we heartily unite in subscribing to this protest.

PHILIP DICKERSON, Chairman.
J. S. ANDERSON, Secretary.
W. PALMER.
SAMUEL MILNER.
GEORGE WYARD.
J. L. MEERES.
THOMAS CHIVERS.
SAMUEL GREEN.
W. HAWKINS.
WILLIAM ALDERSON.
JOHN BLOOMFIELD.
J. BUTTERFIELD.
JOHN HAZELTON.
JAMES GRIFFITH.
GEORGE WEBB. JAMES CURTIS.
CHARLES BOX. JAS. WOODARD.

ZION BAPTIST CHAPEL, WILDERNESS ROW, LONDON.

On Wednesday, September 27th, a tea and public meeting was held in the above chapel, to commemorate the re-opening of the same, by our brother E. Hewlett, twelve months previous.

The meeting was exceedingly interesting from a variety of circumstances that had been permitted to transpire during the period alluded to. When our brother first commenced his labours, the congregation seldom exceeded eighteen or twenty, yet, during the whole of the inclement winter his faith appeared too strong to induce him to relinquish preaching, as he states, that he felt certain, from the erroneous views promulgated in some of the surrounding churches, that there were a few of the Lord's family who would rejoice to have an opportunity of sitting under a pure gospel, and he was willing to wait the Master's bidding for success upon his labours. For that amount of success which had attended his ministry, he felt grateful to the great Head of the Church, and trusted the church now assembling in Zion Chapel, Wilderness-row, might enjoy and exercise all the graces of God's Holy Spirit.

The proceedings of the evening embraced a fourfold object, viz.:—The commemoration of the re-opening of the chapel; thanksgiving for seasonable mercies; the pastors sixtieth natal-day, and the presentation to him of a purse containing eleven guineas.

The tea had been provided gratuitously by the members of the church, and as near as the numbers could be ascertained, 265 persons partook of it.

The public meeting, afterwards, was presided over by our brother C. Woollacott (late of Little Wyld-street), brother Milner, brother Stringer; Messrs. G. Wyard, Bentott, Dixan, and Dearsley, were present, some of whom delivered appropriate addresses. The whole of the proceedings were cheerful, harmonious, and deeply interesting, more especially when we consider that the church assembling there is only in its infancy, having been formed in March last, by thirty-five brethren and sisters, the greater part of whom had withdrawn from a neighbouring church. Since that period, however, additions have been made thereto of upwards of twenty, and, under the divine blessing, it is hoped that a large measure of success will attend the ministry of our dear brother Hewlett, and that many a wandering child of our Lord may be brought to find even in the *wilderness* that there is a stream of living water.

RECEIVED FOR THE BAPTIST TRACT SOCIETY.

		£	s.	d.
By Treasurer.				
Mr. J. Briscoe, London	S.	1	1	0
Mr. Gavin Henderson, Dunrossness	D.	0	10	0
A. T. Bowser, Esq., London	S.	0	10	0
A Friend, at Dundee	D.	0	10	0
H. Cooper, Esq., London	S.	0	10	0
J. Mote, Esq., London	S.	1	1	0
Collected at Bungay, by Rev. J. Brand		0	12	0
By Mr. Whitehead.				
At Beccles, Suffolk.				
Rev. S. K. Bland	S.	0	5	0
Mr. Joseph Harmer	S.	0	5	0
Mr. George Lant	S.	0	5	0
Mr. J. Read	S.	0	5	0
Mr. George Draper	S.	0	2	6
Miss Bird	D.	0	5	0
Mr. Arthur Mount	D.	0	5	0
Mr. and Mrs. Aldred	D.	0	5	0
Mr. and Mrs. Cooper	D.	0	5	0
Mr. William Cobb	D.	0	2	6
Four Friends, 2/6 each	D.	0	10	0
Two Friends, 2/6; and two at 1/		0	7	0
A Few Friends		0	15	0
At Diss.				
William Ayton, Esq.	S.	0	5	0
Rev. J. P. Lewis	D.	0	5	0
R. Leathers, Esq.	D.	0	5	0
Two Friends, 2/6 each	D.	0	5	0
Three Friends, 1/ each	D.	0	3	0
At Layfield.				
Rev. R. E. Sears	S.	0	5	0
At Horham.				
Rev. Thomas Hoddy	S.	0	10	0
Mrs. Plant	S.	0	5	0
Miss M. A. Jennings	S.	0	2	6
Mrs. Rush	S.	0	2	6
At Stradbroke.				
A Friend	D.	0	5	0
Mr. Charles Betts	D.	0	4	0
Four Friends, 2/6 each		0	10	0
A Friend		0	1	0
At Halesworth.				
Rev. W. J. Gooding	S.	0	5	0
Mr. Charles Suggate	S.	0	5	0
Mr. John Bedwell, jun.	S.	0	5	0
Mr. Timothy Sparrow	S.	0	5	0
Two Friends, 2/6 each		0	5	0
Two Friends, 2/ each		0	4	0